

Smithfield 2020 evaluation of the proposed development of Pierceville

Report date: July 7, 2015

Project objective

The development of the Mary Delk Crocker property, Pierceville, into a single-family home neighborhood will have a profound impact on the Historic District. As a community resource tasked with identifying, evaluating and promoting initiatives that contribute to the economic and cultural vitality of the Historic District, Smithfield 2020 defined in May a project to review multiple elements of the development proposal. This report presents that review and is submitted for consideration by the Planning Commission in its evaluation of the rezoning request by Hearndon MC Builders, LLC.

The composition of the Smithfield 2020 Team

Smithfield 2020 was formed in 2010 as a result of an evaluation of the current and future economic health of the Historic District. Team members include two representatives each from Historic Smithfield, the Smithfield/Windsor/Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce and the Isle of Wight Arts League; five Historic District business owners; and the Town Manager, Director of Tourism, and the County Economic Development Director. A project manager is appointed by the Team.

The development of this evaluation

As the successor organization of the Smithfield Historic District Business Association and with Historic District business owners its largest represented constituency, the economic impact of the proposed development was the primary focus of the evaluation. The “fit” or cohesion of the proposed neighborhood within the Historic District and the current and future status of the historic Pierceville property were also reviewed.

The economic impact evaluation used publicly available data that correlates the price range of the proposed 151 homes to associated household income and spending to quantify a forecast of generated economic activity. The potential economic and cultural impacts were also evaluated by an informal survey of Historic District business owners and managers.

The neighborhood evaluation used the artifacts submitted with the rezoning application to identify key features and characteristics of any new neighborhood contemplated for Pierceville.

The historic site evaluation focused on available options to protect the Thomas Pierce house and out-buildings from further deterioration. The project did not identify, as yet, an interested qualified or funded resource to undertake restoration efforts; no restoration proposal is offered in this report.

All members of the Smithfield 2020 Team participated in the development of this report. A motion to authorize its submission to the Planning Commission was adopted on July 7, 2015. The votes cast by the Historic Smithfield, Chamber of Commerce and Arts League representatives were sanctioned by their respective Boards of Directors. The representatives of the Chamber of Commerce cast a NO vote; the Town Manager and Assistant Director of Isle of Wight Economic Development abstained from voting; all other Team members voted to adopt the motion.

Statements on the proposed development of a Downtown Residential neighborhood

Smithfield 2020 offers the following three statements for consideration by the Planning Commission as it deliberates its recommendation to Town Council regarding a Future Land Use amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and the developer's rezoning request of the Pierceville land parcel.

This report is not intended to be and is not submitted as an endorsement for or recommendation against the proposed development. The report and three summary statements are the result of a best-efforts review and compilation of facts and publicly available artifacts submitted by the developer with its rezoning application. The subjective nature of the enumeration of neighborhood and house characteristics and features is acknowledged.

Smithfield 2020 defers to other agencies requested by Town Planning staff – Isle of Wight County Schools, Smithfield Police Department, Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department, Town Public Works, Virginia Department of Transportation – for reports on their respective areas of expertise.

Three summary statements are offered for consideration; they are further explained below.

- *Will a development of 100+ homes benefit the Historic District economically?* Industry data suggest the development of a neighborhood on the Pierceville property will have a positive economic impact during and at full build-out. The majority of Historic District businesses also anticipate a positive economic impact but concerns about the cultural impact have been raised by several respondents.
- *Can a neighborhood of new homes blend in with the existing Historic District neighborhoods?* A rezoning to Downtown Residential has the potential of developing a neighborhood that has reasonable architectural and street designs that “fit” with the surrounding Historic District residential areas but the current proposed masterplan falls short of that defined reasonable fit.
- *Can the historic Pierceville farmstead be preserved while the development process is evaluated?* Legal action is needed to prevent further demolition by neglect of the landmark Thomas Pierce house and several historically significant out-buildings.

Industry data suggest the development of a neighborhood on the Pierceville property will have a positive economic impact at full build-out. The majority of Historic District businesses also anticipate a positive economic impact but concerns about the cultural impact have been raised by several respondents.

Using data provided by Hearndon MC Builders for the proposed “Cary & Main” neighborhood as a point of reference (at full build-out, 151 homes with an average price of \$275,000):

- Annually, \$66,400 of Town and \$352,662 of County real estate tax revenues will be generated. (Current tax rates assumed; figures are not adjusted for inflation.)
- 24 to 70 jobs will be created by the development during its 7 to 10 year build-out. 45 to 80 jobs will be created by the end of the build-out. (Source: National Association of Home Builders)

- The economic impact from earned income and the ripple effect of building 151 single-family homes are forecast to be \$43 million in local income, \$5.4 million in taxes and other local government revenue and 595 local jobs. (Source: NAHB)
- With an average home price of \$275,000, Cary & Main household incomes are expected to range from \$55,000 to \$75,000. (Multiple sources averaged.)
- The households’ on-going impact will be \$6.2 Million in local income (Source: NAHB)

Additional and supporting data, including the expected impact on housing prices in and near the Historic District, are presented on pages 8 to 10.

Note: This report quantified the potential “upside” economic impact. The quantification of the associated public education, service and infrastructure costs have been deferred to the other agencies with the requisite subject matter expertise – Town staff, IWCS, SPD, SVFD, VDOT and others. Smithfield 2020 does, however, recommend that proffers from developers be considered as an integral element of an evaluation of the proposed development.

To complement the industry data, a survey of Historic District business people was conducted by Smithfield 2020 Team members. They attempted on a best-efforts basis to contact all businesses in the Historic District and offered them the opportunity to participate in the survey. (The survey form is on page 11.)

Responses to two statements were solicited. Survey participants could optionally record factors that influenced their responses. The two statements:

- “The proposed development of Pierceville will be good for my business;”
- “The proposed development of Pierceville will be good for the Historic District.”

The responses from 36 surveys are summarized below and fully detailed on pages 12 to 17.

The proposed development will have a positive impact on ...



The charts reflect that 70% of the Historic District business people who responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed Pierceville development would have a positive economic impact on their business and 47% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed development would have a positive impact on the Historic District.

Reasons cited for an expected positive impact on their business included a growing number of local, within-walking distance shoppers, increased spending from local shoppers, and commercial spaces being in greater demand. The Historic District overall was expected to benefit from many of the same factors – more shoppers, a more lively District culturally and economically, more volunteers and participants in community activities.

14% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the assertion of a positive impact on their business and 36% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the assertion of a positive impact for the Historic District. Their concerns focused on housing that does not reflect the styles of nearby residential areas, a neighborhood that would not fit into the Historic District's character, traffic impact and household incomes that would not have a significant impact on the local economy.

Note: There is no representation intended and none should be inferred that it is a formal poll that adhered to professional polling guidelines. All survey forms submitted by the report date are tabulated on pages 12 to 17. There is no representation that the results reflect the opinions of all Historic District business owners.

A rezoning to Downtown Residential has the potential of developing a neighborhood that has a reasonable “fit” with the surrounding Historic District residential areas but the current proposed masterplan falls short of that defined reasonable fit.

A build-out over a seven to ten year period presents a reasonably paced and realistic growth of the Historic District but the proposed neighborhood must incorporate key features and characteristics of housing styles and public areas to define the cohesion and harmony between existing homes and newly constructed houses.

Reflecting the surrounding neighborhoods will require a mix of housing styles that will challenge customization of a limited inventory of product. Build-out by multiple developers is suggested to achieve a better mix of custom-built houses designed within the Historic District guidelines.

Matching the proposed features and characteristics of the Cary & Main development identified some inconsistencies to the suggested features and characteristics.

The details on pages 18 to 20 are submitted for consideration by the Planning Commission as well as the Board of Historic and Architectural Review.

Legal action is needed to prevent further demolition by neglect of the Thomas Pierce house and several historically significant out-buildings.

The Thomas Pierce house and barns are historic structures that are integral to the fabric that defines the cultural vitality of the Historic District. The Planning Commission's recommendation on the rezoning request, whether for approval or for denial, should consider a request that the Town initiate efforts to stabilize the Pierce house and out-buildings identified to be historically significant and that repayment of the expense to do so be ensured through a lien against the property. Town Code provides for a specific legal course of action.

Smithfield Zoning Ordinance, Article 3.M, HP-O, Historic Preservation Overlay District, Section D.1, Inventory of Landmarks, defines and Section H categorizes 502 Grace Street, “Pierceville”, as a Landmark.

Section F.2.G, Standards for Review / Maintenance and Repair Required, stipulates that “All buildings and structures in the HP-O District shall be preserved against decay and deterioration ... to the extent that such decay, deterioration [may] ... produce a detrimental effect upon the character of the district as a whole or upon the life and character of the structure itself...”

The section further stipulates that after notification provisions, “... if the owner fails to act, the Review Board [BHAR] may order the Planning and Zoning Administrator, after due notice to the owner, to enter the property and make or cause to be made such repairs as are necessary to preserve the integrity and safety of the structure. The reasonable costs thereof shall be placed as a lien against the property.”

Submitted on behalf of Smithfield 2020,

/s/ G. R. (Rick) Bodson
Smithfield 2020 project manager
757-869-7968 / smithfield2020@gmail.com

This document was emailed on 7/7/15 to the Planning and Zoning Administrator for forwarding to the members of the Planning Commission. A link to this document was posted on the same day on the homepage of www.Smithfield2020.org.

Smithfield 2020 evaluation of the proposed development of Pierceville Supporting documentation

	Page
Members of the Smithfield 2020 Team	7
Anticipated Economic Impact of the “Cary and Main” Development	8
The Historic District business survey	11
Tabulation of Historic District business survey responses	12
Source data (individual responses) of the Historic District business survey	14
Suggested characteristics of a Pierceville neighborhood	18

Smithfield 2020 Team
As of February 4, 2015

Entity represented	Contact information		
Historic Smithfield	John Edwards	357-3288	editor@smithfieldtimes.com
	Trey Gwaltney	371-4561	gwaltneyathome@aol.com
Historic District businesses	Jim Abicht The Christmas Store	357-7891	jim@christmasstoresmithfield.com
	Lee Duncan Wharf Hill Brewing Co.	334-4102	wleeduncan@gmai.com
	Mark Hall Smithfield Firehouse 1939	357-3113	markhall@hallwood-usa.com
	Jenn Gangemi The Paisley Pig	240-472-6609	jengangemi@mac.com
	Randy Pack Smithfield Station	620-7700	randy.pack@smithfieldstation.com
Chamber of Commerce	Mike Adams	613-0667	mike23430@yahoo.com
	Andy Cripps	407-5192	acripps@theisle.org
Isle of Wight Arts League	Pricilla Barbour	685-1493	cilbarbour182@gmail.com
	Sheila Gwaltney	357-7707	sheila@smithfieldarts.org
Isle of Wight County	Amy Ring	356-1969	aring@isleofwightus.net
Town of Smithfield	Peter Stephenson	449-4848	pstephenson@smithfieldva.gov
Sfd & IOW Tourism	Judy Winslow	357-3502	jwinslow@iwus.net
Project Manager	Rick Bodson	869-7968	rickbodson@gmail.com

Anticipated Economic Impact of the “Cary and Main” Development

Job Creation: The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)¹ provides an economic impact model for single-family units. Single family units provide greater economic impacts than multifamily developments. The NAHB studies estimate that each unit of housing results in between 1.13 and 3.24 short-term jobs, and 0.3 to 0.53 ongoing jobs.

As the developers propose to build 151 single-family homes over seven years, the jobs directly created by the proposed development, based on the NAHB model, would be:

- 24-70 jobs directly created by the development during its seven-year build-out.
- 45-80 ongoing jobs created as a result of the development.

The NAHB estimates the economic impacts (including income earned during construction and the ripple effect that occurs when some of the income is spent) of building 151 single-family homes are:

- \$43.34 million in local income,
- \$5.4 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 595 local jobs.

And the annual, ongoing impacts (resulting from the homes becoming occupied and the occupants participating in the local economy) are:

- \$6.2 million in local income,
- \$1.51 million in taxes and other revenue for local governments, and
- 104 local jobs.

Tax Revenues: In addition to proffers paid to the local government by the developer, the average unit with a target price range for each house of \$250,000 to \$300,000 will generate the following property tax revenues (at the current rates):

- \$440/year to Smithfield², (\$66,440/yr. for all 151 units)
- \$2,337.50 to Isle of Wight County³ (\$352,662.50/yr. for all 151 units)

Residents not only pay local real estate taxes, but also contribute to an array of local taxes and fees. Typically, a household will pay personal taxes on two or more cars that they own. About one in every seven households owns a boat, generating additional personal property taxes. Often, residents operate home-based businesses that generate license taxes and fees. Families go out to eat and spend their income in local shops and stores, generating sales and meals taxes. These household expenditures in the local economy help local businessmen and women who then pay additional taxes to the local government.

¹ The Local Impact of Home Building in a Typical Metro Area: Income, Jobs and Taxes Generated - National Association of Home Builders - June 2009

² Town of Smithfield

³ Isle of Wight County

Existing residents in communities often fear that new housing will drive up their taxes to pay for the costs of educating the children of new residents. A review of the FY2016 Isle of Wight County Schools budget shows that the locally-borne cost of public schools (excluding state and federal funds) per household in the county is \$2,015.93/yr.

Current local per-pupil cost of education:	\$4,945
Number of Students in District:	5528
Number of Households:	13,560
Average local cost of education per household:	\$2,015.93

Business Activity by New Residents: With an average home price of \$275,000, the residents in the “Cary and Main” development can be expected to have an average family income of \$55,000 and \$75,000.

The median American family household income is \$53,046.00.⁴ The average American family in 2013 spent their income this way⁵:

151

Households		
Housing – shelter – \$10,023	15.7%	\$1,513,473
Pensions, Social Security – \$5,027	7.9%	\$759,077
Housing – utilities, fuels, public services – \$3,477	5.45%	\$525,027
Food – food at home – \$3,465	5.43%	\$489,844
Transportation – vehicle purchases – \$3,244	5.08%	\$472,630
Transportation – other expenses and transportation – \$3,130	4.9%	\$472,630
Healthcare – \$2,853	4.47%	\$430,803
Entertainment – \$2,698	4.23%	\$402,868
Food – food away from home – \$2,668	4.18%	\$402,868
Transportation – gasoline, motor oil – \$2,384	3.74%	\$359,984
Apparel and Services – \$1,881	2.95%	\$284,031
Cash Contributions– \$1,821 (optional retirement and cash savings)	2.85%	\$274,971
Housing – household furnishings, equipment – \$1,797	2.81%	\$271,347
Education – \$945	1.48%	\$142,695
Housing – household operations – \$984	1.54%	\$148,584
Miscellaneous – \$808	1.26%	\$122,008
Housing – housekeeping supplies – \$639	1.00%	\$96,489
Alcoholic Beverages – \$457	0.71%	\$69,007
Personal Care – \$588	0.92%	\$88,788
Life, other personal insurance – \$309	0.48%	\$46,659
Reading – \$118	0.18%	\$17,818

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Average annual expenditures and characteristics of all consumer units and percent changes, 2011-2013

Household expenditures in the local economy help local businessmen and women who then pay additional taxes to the local government. The larger the local population base the greater the market for locally produced goods and services and the less income flows out of the locality supporting the economy of other areas.

Impact on Housing Prices: A possible unintended consequence of the Cary and Main development is a downward pull on the market value of existing homes in Smithfield. To assess the validity of that concern, we can look at the main factors that determine a home's value, and see how this new development will change the existing market.

While an influx of available homes in the development will increase competition for the current pool of potential buyers, it is likely that this development will introduce a new product – i.e. newly built single-family homes adjacent to downtown – that could attract buyers who are disinterested in the existing housing stock in Smithfield.

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the impacts of “affordable housing” on property values in a wide variety of circumstances. The vast majority of studies have found that affordable housing does not depress neighboring property values, and may even raise them in some cases.⁶ Overall, the research suggests that, although negative effects can occur in certain circumstances, neighbors should have little to fear. Evidence suggests that affordable housing is more likely to have either no impact or a positive impact on surrounding home prices when located in strong neighborhoods — that is, higher value, lower poverty neighborhoods.

⁶ Ellen, I.G., Schwartz, A.E., Voicu, I., & Schill, M.E. (2007). Does federally subsidized rental housing depress neighborhood property values? New York: Furman Center for Real Estate & Urban Policy

The 2020 economic impact task team members are Jim Abicht, Andy Cripps and Mark Hall. This report was researched and compiled by Andy Cripps.

Smithfield 2020 Team Historic District Business Survey

The proposed development of the 52 acre Pierceville property will affect the cultural and economic vitality of the Historic District. We are evaluating the proposal from three perspectives: a) preservation of the historic Thomas Pierce house; b) the “fit” of the proposed new neighborhood within the District; and c) the economic impact on District businesses. Smithfield 2020 will submit its recommendations to the Planning Commission after it gathers facts on each issue; this survey is part of that effort.

The proposed development – Based on our review of material submitted by the developer (Hearndon MC Builders LLC), the neighborhood will have...

- 151 single-family homes in \$240,000 to \$320,000 price range, built in phases over 7-10 years;
 - Offer six floor plans of 2,000 to 3,000 square feet with a mix of one- and two-story houses;
 - Develop home styles reflecting Federal, Georgian, Victorian and Colonial architecture;
 - Build houses on contract only; a sales office and three model homes are the only “spec” houses.
 - The developer has committed to small parks at the entrances as visual buffers, and will provide brick sidewalks linking the development to Main and Cary Street sidewalks.
 - There are three entrances planned: (1) across Goose Hill Way, (2) at Grace Street (across from Cofer Auto) and (3) onto Main Street between Little’s Market and the Schoolhouse Museum.
 - The developer will commit to a preservation plan for the Thomas Pierce house and out-buildings, if they can be salvaged, and will submit the plan to the Town for approval.
-

The 2020 Team member will record your responses or you may keep this form for later pick-up. You can also mail the survey (we’ll provide you a stamped envelope.) We request that surveys be returned by June 26th.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “Strongly Disagree,” 5 meaning “Strongly Agree,” and 3 meaning “No Opinion / Don’t Know,” do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Disagree				Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
(1) The proposed development will be good <u>for my business.</u>	1	2	3	4	5

Factors that influenced your answer: _____

	Disagree				Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
(2) The proposed development will be good <u>for the Historic District.</u>	1	2	3	4	5

Factors that influenced your answer: _____

(For statistical purposes only) **How many years have you been in business in the District?** _____

Contact information is recorded separately. The contact information will not be associated with this form to maintain anonymity of feedback.

Smithfield 2020 is a volunteer multi-organizational team that addresses initiatives and projects with potential to encourage commercial development, support existing and prospective merchants, promote the arts, and attract and delight residents and visitors while ensuring good stewardship of Smithfield’s historical roots. We’re about economic and cultural vitality in the Historic District.

Tabulation of Historic District business survey responses

Six members of the Smithfield 2020 Team contacted 60 owners and managers of Historic District businesses from June 15th to 29th, 2015.

The purpose of the survey – gathering data for a Smithfield 2020 project evaluating the proposed development of Pierceville – was explained and the request by Town staff for Smithfield 2020 to submit its report to the Planning Commission was acknowledged. The survey form (page 11) summarized key data and characteristics compiled from the developer’s rezoning application about the proposed “Cary & Main” development.

The Smithfield 2020 Team’s position on the proposed development was explained to be neither for or against; the ultimate evaluation is deferred to the Planning Commission and Town Council vetting process. Smithfield 2020’s role in that process is to provide a best-efforts evaluation of the impact on the economic and cultural vitality of the Historic District.

Respondents were informed that contact data (date, business and person’s name) would be logged but not be linked to survey responses. The survey form does not ask for respondent information; the Team member maintained a separate contact log that does not cross-link respondent to survey.

The business person was offered the opportunity to respond at that time, to have the survey picked up at later time, or to have the survey mailed to Smithfield 2020’s PO Box. Of the 60 persons contacted, 1 declined to participate in the survey and 23 have not yet returned their survey.

The survey respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 indicating “strongly disagree”, 5 “strongly agree” and 3 “have no opinion / don’t know”, two statements:

- “The proposed development of Pierceville will be good for my business.”
- “The proposed development of Pierceville will be good for the Historic District.”

The average of responses to “...good for my business” was 3.9.

- 3 (8%) responded “strongly disagree” (1);
- 2 (6%) responded “disagree” (2);
- 6 (17%) responded “no opinion / don’t know” (3);
- 11 (31%) responded “agree” (4);
- 14 (39%) responded “strongly agree” (5).

The average of responses to “...good for the Historic District” was 3.2.

- 9 (25%) responded “strongly disagree” (1);
- 4 (11%) responded “disagree” (2);
- 6 (17%) responded “no opinion / don’t know” (3);
- 4 (11%) responded “agree” (4);
- 13 (36%) responded “strongly agree” (5).

The respondents were given an opportunity to comment on what factors contributed to their rating and were also asked how many years they have been in business in the Historic District.

The factors cited as contributing to responses are summarized below.

All responses are presented in the next section of this report.

<p>“The proposed development of Pierceville will be good for <u>my business</u>.” (Average on the scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) by respondents: 3.9)</p>	
<p>Strongly disagree / disagree (5 of 36 respondents)</p>	<p>Agree / Strongly Agree (25 of 36 respondents)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families with limited disposable incomes • Price range and styles of “starter-homes” • Concern about over-development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger customer base, more business • Families with small children...more business • Increased local spending • Customers within walking distance • More volunteers for non-profit venues, more art & music patrons
<p>“The proposed development of Pierceville will be good for <u>the Historic District</u>.” (Average on the scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) by respondents: 3.2)</p>	
<p>Strongly disagree / disagree (13 of 36 respondents)</p>	<p>Agree / Strongly Agree (17 of 36 respondents)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many homes, fit with existing styles • Price range and styles of “starter-homes” • Loss of small-town charm • Poor traffic patterns developing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More lively culturally and economically • More residents needed for District to realize its full potential • More resources for preservation efforts • More volunteers for District, Town, County • Main Street in country die without growth

The respondents have operated a business in the Historic District for an average of 13.3 years; the median is 12, ranging from 1 to 53 years.

The source data for the surveys is presented on the following pages.

The 2020 Historic District Business team members are Jim Abicht, Lee Duncan, Jenn Gangemi, Mark Hall and Randy Pack; they and Andy Cripps, Chamber of Commerce representative on the 2020 Team, developed and conducted the survey. The data was tabulated by Rick Bodson.

Source data of the Historic District business survey
Survey conducted June 15th to 29th, 2015

Number of surveys offered:	60	Surveys declined:	1
Surveys completed:	36	Surveys not yet returned:	23

Average of the point total on the 1 - 5 scale:	<i>1: Strongly disagree; 2: Disagree</i>		
Pierceville will be good for my business: 3.9	<i>3: No opinion / don't know</i>		
Pierceville will be good for Historic District: 3.2	<i>4: Agree; 5: Strongly agree</i>		
Total number of responses to each scale point and percent of the total:			
Pierceville will be good for my business:	Pierceville will be good for Historic District:		
Strongly disagree: 3 / 8%	Strongly disagree: 9 / 25%		
Disagree: 2 / 6%	Disagree: 4 / 11%		
No opinion / don't know: 6 / 17%	No opinion / don't know: 6 / 17%		
Agree: 11 / 31%	Agree: 4 / 11%		
Strongly agree: 14 / 39%	Strongly agree: 13 / 36%		

Respondents were asked how long they had been in business in the Historic District.

Average years in business: 13.3 Median of the years in business: 12

Individual survey responses (1 to 5 scale), comments and years in business			
Good for my business and why:		Good for Historic District and why:	Years
4	Bigger customer base, especially families with young children would help sales.	3	Good for the shops...torn on how it will affect residents.
4	All new homes are potential customers. We are still a little higher end though.	2	Housing does not reflect that of Grace and Main St (300 block)
4	Growing number of customers	4	Increased business throughout
3	I've lived here all my life. I do not want Smithfield over-developed.	1	Smithfield will lose its small town charm. Traffic / loss of agriculture. Growth is good, but not sure if this will keep town cool as it is
5	More people, more opportunity to sell goods & services	3	

Good for my business and why:	Good for Historic District and why:	Years
5 Addition of residents...will mean more spending within the historic district and all over Smithfield. More spending means more viable business concerns and greater demand for spaces to locate new businesses.	5 More people will make for a more lively district both culturally and economically.	4
1 Envision young families without disposable income.	1 Poor traffic patterns will develop. Poor contrast of new construction with historical buildings.	17
2 Price range of housing; starter-home style development	1 Price range of housing; starter-home style development	23
4 Questioned median income of homes in that area	2 Housing style is cookie cutter	30
5 Addition of new housing within walking distance means...expect employees to locate closer to work...benefit to our business and employees in the elimination of lost time driving and [in] fuel costs.	5 New people will be great for the historic district... among new residents new volunteers...in our community...for VFW, firefighters, EMTs, artists and patrons of the arts, new audiences for music and theater events, etc.	25
4 This could be an opportunity for new customers and business volume.	3 While it could bring more business, it could cause traffic issues and not fit in with the "look" of the District.	15
5 Many more potential customers.	5 This end of the district needs to be cleaned up so badly...	6
3	1 Lots too small.	33
2 Houses that are in the median price range now will be below the median in the next 10 years and will then be bad for my business.	1	3
5 I believe if it brings more people to Smithfield, it gives us all more business.	5 As long as the building(s) stay within Historic code.	15
5 Increases in spending by local residents will make existing businesses more visible and will attract new business to meet growing demand... mean higher occupancies, higher rents and higher property values.	5 300-400 new customers within walking distance of historic businesses will significantly impact economic vitality in a positive way and will create a winning economic situation; more positive investments will materialize.	21
5 Always need growth.	5 Most Main streets in country die!	15

Good for my business and why:		Good for Historic District and why:		Years
1	Because of the homes / small area, I would like to see farmlets like the ones at Windsor Park (Jericho Estates).	1	Too many houses.	10
5	More customers within walking distance will mean more spending and more profits in Smithfield and the historic district in particular.	5	The historic district needs more residents to meet its potential.	7
5	As a non-profit performing arts organization regionally known for our quality, we need more local volunteers, more patrons, more actors and more stage and technical volunteers.	5	More residents within walking distance will be a boon to the visual and performing arts locally. We need more patrons and volunteers for Smithfield to continue growing as a regional boutique arts destination.	53
5	More prosperous local businesses	5	A more vibrant downtown brings more resources for preservation.	1.5
3	I believe it will be better for the district; more young couples; we need to adjust our business atmosphere / products.	3	Yes, if it maintains / accentuates the unique personality the district exemplifies.	4
4	The additional population would generate revenue for my professional services business.	4	The additional population would patronize downtown businesses.	
5	Increased visibility and foot traffic will make commercial rental properties more desirable to developing or expanding...expect lower vacancies and higher potential rents leading to higher property values.	5	Project will amount to an investment in the historic district of over \$42,000,000 expected. Municipal income will rise as a result of taxes and fees. Residents expected to spend an estimated \$7.5 mill annually on needs NOT including mortgage payments. In addition, moving forward would create a way to preserve the historic property which is currently going to ruin.	25
4	Would have picked 5 but don't know if increased numbers living in town would discourage visitors from out of area to come...and spend	2	A more historic looking home design would be my preference rather than the limited offerings.	21
3	Possibly more clients	1	Too much traffic!	12

Good for my business and why:		Good for Historic District and why:	Years
4 Any increase in numbers will result in an increase in business purely due to increased foot traffic.	3	It will be difficult to make the homes look like they will "fit in" in the Historic District. However, the resulting renovation of the Pierce House will definitely be beneficial to the Historic District.	13
4 More people will mean more business.	1	Once we lose historic district property, we can never get it back. I would like to see it remain historical property.	14
1 I believe this parcel of land should remain as it is currently designated.	1	I believe the traffic and ingress and egress of the development will be horrible. In addition, I cannot see that this development will add to my business.	9.5
3 Possibly more visibility to folks who travel Main St	2	# of additional vehicles in the area plus construction vehicles for years to come	3
5 Walking distance to Main St businesses.	5	Increased probability new residents will add to the vibrancy of downtown.	15

Respondent requested these additional comments be recorded:

Having more families within walking distance of the Main Street business district most probably will increase my business' exposure to families most likely to purchase our goods and services.

Some new residents will likely possess and share their talent, skill, education and interests by becoming involved in the current cultural offerings, i.e., volunteers for civic clubs & libraries, participants in community theatre and athletics. There may be musicians, artists, writers and history buffs who will be more likely to become active locally than residents of isolated "bedroom community" neighborhoods.

Several surveys were submitted without comments:

4	4	1
5	5	14
4	4	5
3	3	34
5	5	3

Suggested characteristics of a Pierceville neighborhood

Pierceville is the last remaining large parcel of developable land in the Town of Smithfield and as such, should be safeguarded and offered to the developer who is able to build and augment the GENUiNE Smithfield experience. The area should look like it has developed organically, like a “real” small town. When coming up with the “ideal” neighborhood characteristics for Pierceville, consideration was given to what the market should be for this development; specifically, the area should attract young professional/creative class residents, families and older empty nesters, homeowners who typically like a walkable lifestyle close to shopping, dining and things to do...and who prefer little yard maintenance. Large lots are not considered in keeping with the Historic District. A discussion of price point was deferred, instead preferring to have the price point set itself utilizing the enumerated characteristics. Square footage requirements were not discussed because a wide range of housing sizes is preferable and as a result, density is not quantified.

Using the masterplan, development plan and proffers for “Cary & Main” provided by the developer as a point of reference for this evaluation, key features were identified for any new neighborhood sited on the Pierceville parcel.

Note: The Smithfield 2020 Team acknowledges that several features listed below are not within the scope of the Downtown Residential (DN-R) zoning specifications and are at a level of detail that falls outside of the purview of the Planning Commission. The features presented below are intended to characterize “fit” of any large development with the existing surrounding Historic District neighborhoods.

Characteristics of the houses:

- Building materials and design that are consistent with current BHAR standards and current Historic District architectural guidelines. Architectural styles include Craftsman, Victorian, Federal, Colonial, Farmhouse, Gothic Cottage; “Neo-...” is not considered consistent.
- Chimneys that are representative of the architectural elements of Historic District houses.
- Porches that are at least 8 feet deep. These do not merely serve as ornamentation but encourage neighborhood interaction.
- Columns and other porch details that reflect the style of the house.
- Foundations that are crawl space vs. slab. The majority of traditional Historic District homes are built on a crawl space.
- Garages that are carriage style, avoiding as much as possible front loading garages. An appearance of a separate structures with carriage-style garage doors and features is preferred.
- Setbacks that have a minimum depth from the front façade of the house to the front face of a street-facing garage door.
- Picket or other fencing styles that coordinate with the house style.

Characteristics of the public rights of way, sidewalks, streets:

- Streets that are laid out in a traditional grid pattern with real corners, no cul-de-sacs or roundabouts.
- Sidewalk configurations that match Grace Street, e.g., curb/grass/ sidewalk / lawn.

- Street light fixtures (and their emitted color), benches and trash receptacles that match those on Church Street.
- Oval street signs that match those in the rest of the District.
- Streets that (if at all feasible) are consistent with existing downtown streets by being paved in exposed aggregate concrete. At a minimum, consideration of aggregate concrete should be given for the new streets that tie into the Historic District.

Other characteristics to enhance the cohesion with the adjoining Historic District (*which may not be consistent with current DN-R zoning*):

- The proposed development specifies a 25' front setback; no maximum setback is specified. This is a deeper setback than currently exists in most of the residential area of the Historic District. We recommend specifying a setback that is compatible with downtown and considering a build-to line to maintain consistency between the houses.
- Allowable "Granny Suites" over garages (and the zoning to accommodate) should be considered. (There are examples of these on Grace and Washington Streets.)
- For any commercial development (a one-acre commercial rezoning is mentioned in the application which is assumed to be in the Little's Market area), consider adding loft style housing over commercial. (Example: The 1939 Firehouse on N. Church Street.)

Observations and comments specific to Hearndon's Cary & Main development:

- The proposed development falls into two subareas of the Historic District: Riverfront, which includes a variety of late 19th century and early 20th century architectural styles; and the Main and Grace Streets subarea, which includes mainly a variety of Victorian style houses. The developer states "the predominate architectural theme for Cary & Main will be Neo- Traditional and encourage architecture that embodies the themes of Historic, Georgian, Colonial, Traditional, and Craftsman style architecture." Some of these words are not architectural terminology and do not provide a clear intention for the architectural style and detailing of the houses.
- The proposed houses appear to draw some inspiration from the surrounding historic house styles but in some cases have a mix of details from various styles and often have oversimplified details with incorrect proportions.
- Five models each with at least two different elevations and no two dwellings of identical elevation on the same side of the street within three lots are described, with façade reversal counted as a different elevation. A façade reversal should not count as a different elevation. Instead of replicating home styles, allow the neighborhood to develop with custom housing that reflects the housing currently in place in the historic district.
- Window styles used are not found in the Historic District, e.g., four-over-four types.
- Window materials are identified as wood or vinyl. BHAR guidelines do not permit vinyl but allow metal; consideration should be given to wood, aluminum clad, or fiberglass.

- False muntins and internal grilles violate BHAR guidelines; simulated divided light windows should be considered.
- Guidelines recommend shutters to be wood and mounted on hinges. Recommend allowing wood or composite shutters that must be correct width and mounted as if operable.
- Guidelines recommend porches on new houses to reflect the size, height and materials of porches in the Historic District.
- Cornices appear to be the same and do not reflect the variety of styles found in the Historic District. Designing additional types of appropriate cornices should be considered.
- All porches except the Craftsman models have the same columns, the only variation being two different widths. Columns and other porch details should reflect the style of the house.
- The proffers call for two separate doors in double garages, which we would also recommend. Doors shown in elevations do not appear to be two separate doors but single doors made to look like double doors.

The 2020 neighborhood task team members are Randy Pack, Amy Ring and Judy Winslow. This report of the team's recommendations was compiled by Randy Pack and Rick Bodson.
